

February 21, 2017

Jeffrey & Debra Delombard
724 Plainville Avenue
Farmington, CT 06032

Dear Appropriations Committee Co-Chairs: Senator Formica, Senator Osten, & Representative Walker:

We are writing this letter to request your support in continuing the same level of funding to public magnet schools across the state of Connecticut. These schools provide exceptional learning opportunities for children of various backgrounds to grow academically and socially in a safe environment, which provides for a rich learning environment not available at this caliber anywhere else.

In 2008, we enrolled our newly adopted four year old son in CREC's Reggio Magnet School. It was a very challenging year transitioning him into a new home, school and family; however, the support we received from the school was remarkable. The school worked with us and him to identify his best learning environment and equally served all students in the school in this manner. They help each child thrive and incorporate the individual students interests in all subject areas, so the kids remain engaged and interested throughout the year. Because the students come from different racial, socio-economic and geographic locations, both the students and their families learn to co-exist and experience conversations/dialogue from different perspectives. This sets the foundation for learning to live in a global society where the students learn to appreciate different perspectives and experiences. Now in seventh grade he is using these skills to help him navigate his movement towards independence, develop friendships and succeed academically. We believe his current success is related to the strong educational foundation developed during his elementary school years at a magnet school.

As a result of his success, we enrolled our daughter in the CREC Ana Grace Academy Magnet School in 2014. In her three years, she also benefits from her interactions with children from different racial, socio-economic and geographic backgrounds while learning in an environment that provides a safe place to challenge herself and others, ask questions and identify answers. The exceptional teachers at Ana Grace love the children as their own and help each child learn at their own pace. They provide various activities identified by the children to develop hands-on learning and engage students in fun, interactive ways to help the child develop their skills and personalities. The arts component coupled with the academics are ideal in helping our daughter become stronger, more confident and intelligent each day.

We are fortunate that our children have had the benefit of a magnet school education and we believe other children in Connecticut should be offered the same experience, which cannot happen without your continued funding and support. Please maintain the magnet school funding at previous levels and do not reduce funding at the expense of Connecticut's children.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey & Debra Delombard